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ABSTRACT

This paper describes and explains how journal writing may be used as a qualitative research technique in long-term qualitative studies. Journal writing has a long and reliable history in the arts and humanities, and it provides qualitative researchers with a powerful heuristic tool. The notion of a comprehensive reflective journal to address the researcher's self is critical in qualitative work due to the fact that the researcher is the research instrument. Interactive journal writing between a researcher and participants is also a useful qualitative technique. A brief historical overview of journal writing sets the stage for the discussion of journal writing as a way to document the researcher's role, triangulate data by using the journal as a data set, and using the journal with participants as a communicative act. These points are illustrated by excerpts from the researcher's own journal about writing the paper. (Contains 10 references.) (SLD)

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JOURNAL WRITING AS A QUALITATIVE RESEARCH TECHNIQUE: HISTORY ISSUES, AND REFLECTIONS

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Journal Writing As A Qualitative Research Technique: History, Issues, and Reflections

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> Beneath the rule of men entirely great,
> The pen is mightier than the sword.
>
> Edward Bulwer -Lytton
> Richelieu, 1839, Act II, Sc.2.

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this paper is to describe and explain how journal writing may be used as a qualitative research technique, in long term qualitative studies. Journal writing has a long and reliable history in the Arts and Humanities, and qualitative researchers may learn a great deal from this activity. It is not by accident that artists, writers, musicians, dancers, therapists, physicians, poets, architects, saints, scientists and educators use journal writing in their lives. Virtually in every field, one can find exemplars who have kept detailed and lengthy journals regarding their everyday lives and their beliefs, hopes and dreams. In this paper I view journal writing as a powerful heuristic tool and research technique and will discuss reasons for using a journal within qualitative research projects in order to:

1) Refine the understanding of the role of the researcher through reflection and writing, much like an artist might do;

2) Refine the understanding of the responses of participants in the study, much like a physician or health care worker might do;

3) Use a journal as an interactive tool of communication between the researcher and participants in the study, as a type of interdisciplinary triangulation of data.

4) View journal writing as a type of connoisseurship by which individuals become connoisseurs of their own thinking and reflection patterns and indeed their own understanding of their work as qualitative researchers.

The notion of a comprehensive reflective journal to address the researcher's self is critical in qualitative work due to the fact that the researcher is the research instrument. Topics covered in this paper, are limited by time and not meant to be exhaustive. In reviewing the literature in this area, journal writing, while an ancient technique, is only now being used and talked about as a serious component in qualitative research projects. For the purposes of this paper, journal writing will be viewed as a major source of data. Areas to be studied include problems of representation, co-construction of meaning with participants in the project who also keep a journal, and issues related to the interpretation of each other's data. Often writers/ researchers are positioned outside the very people and situations they are writing about. Journal writing personalizes representation in a way that forces the researcher to confront issues of how a public text legitimates itself and makes claims for its own authority. In other words, how do the researcher and the participant or participants in the project move from a blank page to sentence after sentence of description of a given experience, the basis of qualitative work? Furthermore, how are we to make sense of this writing and understand how lived experience is represented by the writer/researcher and the participants?

Basically , the art of journal writing and subsequent interpretations of journal writing produces meaning and understanding which are shaped by genre, the narrative form used, and personal cultural and paradigmatic conventions of the writer who is either the researcher, participant, and or co-researcher. As Progoff (1992) notes, journal writing is ultimately a way of getting feedback from ourselves and in so doing, it enables us to experience in a full and open ended way, the movement of our lives as a whole and the meaning that follows from reflecting on that movement.

Issues to be considered by the qualitative researcher include: moving from the field to the text to the final public research report and problems of interpretation, meaning, and representation. Interactive journal writing between researcher and participants will also be referred to showing examples from a current research project, now in its fourth year, which I have been participating in as a co-researcher , interviewing teachers who are leaving the profession. All involved have been keeping a journal to reflect upon the research process and the questions asked in the interviews. These examples will foreground the problems, possibilities and applications of journal writing as a qualitative research technique.

A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF JOURNAL WRITING

As we begin this journey of describing and explaining journal writing it is important to realize the lengthy and significant tradition and history of journal writing. While individuals have probably kept journals throughout recorded history for various reasons, some of the first known journals were written in Greek and Roman times. Later, St. Augustine and Blaise Pascal kept

journals to chronicle moments in their own lives as they tried to find out more about how the mind works. In the 10th century, ladies of the Japanese court wrote precise and candid description of everyday life and the inner workings of one's beliefs and feelings. Often these writers hid their journals under their pillows and so the journals became known as "pillow diaries". These documents went beyond the daily record of life. They were texts which recorded dreams, hopes, visions, fantasies, feelings and innermost thoughts. Next the rebirth and awakening of the Renaissance brought with it an era of almost required journal and diary writing. There was an almost understood agreement that one must chronicle the spirit of rebirth and living in personal terms case by case.

The 1660's brought us Samuel Pepys, who for nine years described exactly and in astounding detail, the people, politics, sorrows and joys of life in London. His thick description of the problems of the Church of England, the monarchy, the Navy in which he served, various wars of the day, the great fire and the plague are brilliant and illuminative records of literature and history. As luck would have it, the first published versions of his diary did not appear till 1825, followed by reissues and new editions well into the late 1890's. It was at this time that the Victorians focused on both letter writing and journals.

Likewise and prior to the Victorian era, a number of spiritual and some religious groups kept spiritual journals. The Quakers for example, beginning in the 17th century, often and regularly described their spiritual journeys, doubts, questions, and beliefs. John Wesley, founder of Methodism, kept volumes recording his symbolic relationship with his God. Indeed many Puritans recorded their trust in God, doubt, uncertainty, miseries in their lives, sins, omissions of goodness and so on. The voyage of the Mayflower is

eloquently and curiously described in journal form. For people who were embarking on new adventures, the journal became an outlet for fears and moments of deep despair on the voyage. The use of the journal from spiritual record to political record flourished as well. Remember, at these points in time, writing was a key and important means of communication. There were no telephones, pagers, computers, televisions, or news media as we know them. For example, during the French Revolution, many writers produced "journals intime". These were personal accounts of arguments regarding the revolution and which revealed deep and passionate feelings of patriotism, nationalism and disgust for the corrupt monarchy.

Similarly, in this country, during the Westward expansion movement, explorers like Lewis And Clark chronicled their movement West describing relationships with the Native Americans and encounters with existing communities. Likewise, pioneer women not only cooked around the campfires, but also took the time to record personal impressions of the Westward movement. Later, these would be chronicled in the play, QUILTERS. This play powerfully documented a history of depression, sorrow, joy, misunderstanding and treachery. There would be no sugar coating of injustice and bigotry in these diaries. In addition, an eloquent account of the brutality of slavery in this country is chronicled in the Slave Narratives. One cannot turn away from the writings of Olaudah Equiano, Mary Prince, Frederick Douglass, or the Incidents in the life of a slave girl, Harriet Jacobs, by now all classics of this genre. The clarity, suffering, and degradation described in the Slave Narratives, inform our understanding of a history of the Black Diaspora. Were it not for these detailed accounts, a critical piece of American History would certainly have been forgotten.

Yet literary and historical figures are not the only journal writers. The field of psychology has long made use of journal writing as a therapeutic aid. The cathartic function of journal writing has been widely recommended by many schools of therapy. Therapists view the journal as an attempt to bring order to one's experience and a sense of coherence to one's life. Behaviorists, Cognitivists and Jungian Analysts have used journals in the process of therapy. The journal is seen as a natural outgrowth of the clinical situation in which the client speaks to the self. Most recently, Ira Progoff (1975) has written of an intensive journal. Progoff developed a set of techniques which provide a structure for keeping a journal and a springboard for development. As a therapist himself, he has conducted workshops and trained a network of individuals to do workshops on keeping an intensive journal for unlocking one's creativity and coming to terms with one's self. The intensive journal method, is a reflective, in depth process of writing, speaking what is written, and in some cases sharing what is written with others. Feedback is an operative principle for the Progoff method. The individual needs to draw upon inner resources to arrive at the understanding of the whole person. The journal is a tool to reopen the possibilities of learning and living. Progoff advocates the following:

a) Make regular entries in the journal in the forms of dialogue with one's self,

b) Maintain the journal as an intensive psychological workbook in order to record all encounters of one's existence.

c) Attempt some type of sharing of this growth through journal writing with others.

The method makes use of a special bound notebook, or computer file, divided into definite categories which include: dreams, stepping stones, dialogues with persons, events, work, and the body. The writer is asked to reflect, free associate, meditate, and imagine that which relates to immediate experience. The latest version of his text (1992) is a definite testimonial to a solid example of techniques for keeping a journal.

Beyond the psychologists, perhaps the two most identifiable writers of journals in our memory are Anne Frank and Anais Nin. In fact, THE DIARY OF ANNE FRANK and the many volumes of THE DIARY OF ANAIS NIN are published in over 20 languages. Anne Frank's lived experience hiding from the Nazi's not only detail her feelings of growing up under these conditions, but offer a political and moral interpretation of humanity's failures. On the other side of the coin, Anais Nin describes and explains her journey to understand her self, her body, and her mind. Interestingly enough, she also studied Ira Progoff's journal writing method before she died. Although she rejected its structure, she commented on the importance of its purpose and ultimate goal of self actualization. Even more current, one only has to walk through the display aisles of the major bookstores like Border's or Barnes and Noble and see the many examples of recently published journals. Recently, I found the following:

1. Keith Haring Journals
2. The Andy Warhol Journals (this one complete with photos, drawings, and artwork)
3. The Journal of a VietNam Veteran
4. The Journal of Someone dying of AIDS.

The point is that this genre is alive and well, and qualitative researchers should not be afraid of trying to keep a journal.

In fact, journal writing is so prevalent now, that one only has to surf the Internet and see thousands of journal resources, examples, and personal histories on line. For example, there is an on line course on journal writing offered by Via Creativa, a web site entirely devoted to Ira Progoff's Intensive Journal Workshop, chat rooms on journal writing, exemplars of diaries and journal writing, and literally thousands of resources. The reader of this paper will be somewhat overwhelmed by the multitude of sources. As with anything on the Internet, we all will have to sift through to see what is best for our purposes. In general the common thread which unites all these resources on the Internet, is the agreement that journal writing is a way of getting in touch with yourself in terms of reflection, catharsis, remembrance, creation, exploration, problem solving, problem posing, and personal growth. I see all of these as part of the research process. For qualitative researchers, journal writing offers a way to document the researcher's role, triangulate data by the journal itself entered as a data set, and a way to use the journal with participants in the study as a communicative act.

THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

While journal writing has its seeds and tradition in the Arts and Humanities, I will rely on understanding the use of the journal from that branch of Humanities study known as Social Psychology and the Symbolic Interactionism. In addition, what Denzin calls "Interpretive Interactionism" will inform and frame this discussion. Symbolic Interactionists have historically argued that we all give meaning to the symbols we encounter in

interacting with one another. Interpretive Interactionists go a step further in that the act of interpretation is also a communication act with one or more interactors. For Progoff, one interacts with oneself in the form of dialogues. For qualitative researchers, the options are wide and varied. We may keep track of our thoughts, beliefs, behaviors, and interpretations of our role as researchers in dialogue form or other formats. Many choose to write in letter format with members in a given study. Others keep interactive journals on line through email correspondence. Others exchange journals and write in each other's texts as a type of interaction and communication between individuals. As we become connoisseurs of journal writing, we inevitably create our own best model, what works for our purposes, case by case. We can easily look to the many writers referred to earlier in this paper and other well known diarists, like Virginia Woolf, for solid, well written models of journal writing.

WHY JOURNAL WRITING?

Students and colleagues have often asked me why should one invest the time in journal writing? To this I can only reply that journal writing allows one to reflect, to dig deeper if you will into the heart of the words, beliefs, and behaviors, we describe in our journals. It allows one to reflect on the tapes and interview transcripts from our research endeavors. If participants also keep a journal, it offers a way to triangulate data and pursue interpretations in a dialogical manner. It is a type of member check done on paper.

The clarity of writing down one's thoughts, will allow for stepping into one's inner mind and reaching further into interpretations of the behaviors, beliefs, and words we write. For example, a student conducting a mini study

in a qualitative methods class wrote in her journal and described some of her inner thoughts:

> I am a bit wary of this research...Am I really a researcher because I am taking a class? Can I ever hope to portray what someone else believes or at least says she believes? How will I know if I am being fair? Will I be able to trust this person? Will she trust me? Why should she trust me? Am I being to critical of myself? I am waiting here and she is already 20 minutes late. I hope she gets here soon... Here she comes. Now I try to capture this person's thoughts on why she is an administrator....
>
> K.S. 97

As we look at this journal entry, one can easily see the learner/researcher in training asking questions which cause reflection on various issues about the research process. She is beginning to know more about herself and her strengths and weaknesses. She is on the road to defining her role as the research instrument. To illustrate these points, I would like to continue the bulk of this paper in the form of my own journal about writing this paper.

A JOURNAL ON WRITING A JOURNAL

MONDAY

I am trying to decide if I should write this paper with a section on describing the various uses of journal writing like keeping a journal of one's dreams, a journal in the form of a dialogue like Ira Progoff suggests.

Or should I write about only keeping a journal as a qualitative research technique since the audience will basically be researchers? I definitely have to find some examples of the work of my students, who wrote detailed and reflective journals in my qualitative research methods class. That might get me started here.

TUESDAY

In my quest to find examples I was most fortunate. Here is an example from J.D. an experienced teacher of some 15 years who teaches middle school in a metropolitan area. She writes her thoughts on the classroom, which was part of her study of students from single family homes.

> ..I love these kids...most from broken homes, most thinking I am their parent, advisor, guardian, good cop, teacher, analyst, and coach. I am trying to get them to read more...comic books, novels, go to the library, and then get them to write about this. I think I will go for the two page report idea again. It gives me something to reinforce their understanding of what they read and to give them some feedback. I am worried about P. He is always skipping class these days and although I know his brother is home from prison, I wish he would come back to school. I will talk to the principal about this today if I don't forget. I also want to design a new way of evaluating my class without the letter grades we are stuck with. I am reading about the use
>
> of portfolios in classroom assessment and I think I will try it this month

> and get the kids to plan it with me...I hope I can use the students' comments on their home situations in my (research) project.
>
> J.D. 4-96

WEDNESDAY

Should I mention that not everyone finds it easy to keep up with the demands of journal writing? The discipline and desire involved nearly outweigh some individuals ability and or time ? On the other hand, can this not be for all who are interested in becoming better researchers, writers, thinkers, scholars? How does one set time apart for journal writing? I recall the teacher who said she only had twenty minutes after school to write in her journal and that was that. Then she ultimately decided she needed to keep a journal at home as well since once she started to write, she found she was staying at school and writing for at least an hour each day. She got up an hour earlier than anyone in her house and started writing in the early morning hours, a technique advocated by many writers. It seems she had to write about her problems in the class from day to day, in order to proceed with her qualitative research project, a study of her first year as a middle school area director.

THURSDAY

I am so happy H.H. let me see her journal entries. I am going to use only one of her examples regarding a problem in her classroom.

> ...Once again I have to deal with M. Why is he refusing to write in class and why is he afraid to tell me what is bothering him? He

has done this before but we could always talk this out before...I am taking a class right now that relates to this directly...None of the books or papers is helping me so I am just going ahead and going to try a home visit to talk to his Mom and see if she can help...

Since I started visiting parents who were unable to come to teacher conferences, I am humbled by what I am learning...M's mother is working three jobs to keep the family of three children and herself together...I wonder if I would have her courage at this point? She has told me that M. is getting in with the "wrong crowd" and has been involved in questionable activities which is why he is skipping school so often. Even sending someone to check on this has not yielded any positive results. She said she thought this was due to more than "being a teenager" but felt that there were no strong role models for him at home. No relatives live nearby. I brought some of M's work to show her and she felt a bit reassured that at least he was doing something, though she added that "he could do better". I decided I would talk to him tomorrow and ask him to help me organize the class project on voting in the November elections. I felt conflicted upon leaving the house, for I feared that M's Mom needed to talk to someone about her kids and that I wasn't very much of a help at all...Is this part of my role as a researcher? Should I write about this? Am I too much the social worker from my previous life? ...I do feel more inspired to be better at letting the kids take over more of the responsibility for class projects. Actually it was M. who taught me this month when he volunteered to lead the book circle discussion.

H.H. 96

Is this a good time to talk about how journal writing can assist one in developing creativity? I am reminded about creativity by Ira Progoff's (1992) text, AT A JOURNAL WORKSHOP: WRITING TO ACCESS THE POWER OF THE UNCONSCIOUS AND EVOKE CREATIVE ABILITY. I am also reminded that Anais Nin didn't like Progoff's method. It was too linear for her. Yet, every time I read that text, I see something new in it. Even reading the publicity blurbs about it like Joseph Campbell saying "Progoff's Intensive Journal Process is one of the great inventions of our time" , makes me rethink my own writing. Tomorrow I will describe a bit about Progoff's method.

FRIDAY

When did I first hear about Ira Progoff? Now I recall. It was 1980 something and was giving a talk at the University of Alberta in Edmonton on Qualitative Research Methods. In the audience was a former high school teacher of mine who happened to be working on her doctorate there and she mentioned it to me in passing. Since that day I have tried to put into practice as much of what Progoff describes. His intensive Journal Workshop teaches us to be reflective and aware of our unconscious self. He advocates writing a journal as a dialogue with oneself. He began his journal workshops in 1966 and has been refining them ever since. He talks about keeping a daily log. Yes, there is no getting around it- you need to write in this journal every day. No resting. There is only movement forward. He suggests keeping dialogues with key persons in our lives, with our body, with our works, with our roads not taken, with events that were critical in our lives with society, and with our dreams. In other words, we write our journals in dialogue form which prompts us to think in new ways. For qualitative researchers a dialogue with the self may assist in refining the description of the researcher's role. even if

dialogues are not the preferred method of writing, a reflective personal narrative form can be helpful as in this example:

> ...As I interview the people in my study, I am constantly unnerved by the issue of my race. As an African American woman, will this influence the responses from my participants? Most of them are either African American or recent immigrants from Caribbean nations. I am not sure it will help me and in fact I wonder what they will think of me as a researcher.
>
> R.H. 2-97

Another example from a person grappling with emotions in fieldwork is instructive:

> ...I am already disgusted with what I found out today at the office I am studying. The person I interviewed actually told me he had to lie to people on a regular basis regarding their ability to get a loan for a mortgage. I am going to include this in my report in any event. I am also very tired from this lengthy interview and may have new ideas about it tomorrow.
>
> J. D. 1-97

These researchers provide a way of re- viewing how one thinks about work in the field. Both are on the road to being sharper as they delineate their own roles in the research project.

SATURDAY

Progoff got me thinking about all the books on journal writing that have been useful to me and my students. One of my next favorites after Progoff is Thomas Mallon's (1995) text, A BOOK OF ONE'S OWN: PEOPLE AND THEIR DIARIES. In his overview of diarists and journal writers he categorizes the writers as follows:

* **Chroniclers:** People who keep their diaries every single day as if recording the news,
* **Travelers:** People who keep a written record during a special time such as a vacation or a trip,
* **Pilgrims:** People who want to discover who they really are,
* **Creators:** People who write to sketch out ideas, and inventions in art or science,
* **Apologists:** People who write to justify something they have done to plead their case before all who read the journal,
* **Confessors:** People who conduct ritual unburdenings, conducted with the promise of secrecy or anonymity,
* **Prisoners:** People who must live their lives in prisons or who may be invalids and as a result must live their lives through keeping a journal.

Of course any writer might be a combination of any of these categories but this might be useful as a tool to understand different approaches to keeping a journal. He gives numerous examples of individuals who fall into these categories to illustrate the importance of keeping a journal. In fact, he got interested in writing his book because he himself has kept a journal for

over thirty years. I share that interest with him. I started writing a journal in high school and since then have been faithful to journal writing.

Currently, there are so many wonderful resources on journal writing in popular culture and specifically accessible through the Internet. Recently in a search on the World wide web, by entering the words "journal writing" , I saw over three million entries. In fact, in addition to the journal writing course on the web, there are many web sites on the Progoff method, journal writing as a tool for creativity, therapy and spiritual growth.

SUNDAY

Last night I couldn't sleep as I thought about all the examples of journal writing in popular culture. First I recalled Doogie Howser. The television show of a few years ago chronicled a youthful doctor who was a sort of Leonardo DiCaprio type. Younger than his peers in the medical profession, Doogie opened and closed each show writing in his journal which he kept on his laptop computer. His struggles as a gifted teenager among cynical colleagues and his struggle to know himself were the focus of the journal writing moments in the show. Then I remembered Bob Packwood's diaries. The Senator actually wrote about his extra curricular activities away from home and family and which ultimately was used to force his resignation from the US Senate due to his sexual harassment of young office workers. Then who can forget the OJ Simpson trial? The mass media circus that surrounded this bizarre case, was highlighted for me by the fact that the murdered woman's diary was not allowed as evidence even though it described in great detail circumstances directly related to the case. All this makes me wonder what would be most helpful to the reader of this paper. Since the audience is an audience of educational researchers or researchers in training, I think I need

to mention one more resource about journal writing. It is Tristine Rainer's (1978) text , THE NEW DIARY. Rainer co taught with Anais Nin, a course on journal writing to students at a Los Angeles college. She wrote this book which contains superb examples of journal writing. I agree with her use of the terms "journal" and "diary" interchangeably. She describes seven techniques for journal writing some very similar to Progoff's technique. Her list is one which qualitative researchers may recognize as those regularly used in the Arts and Humanities:

*Lists: This techniques allow for a person to write lists of activities like things to do, things that upset a person, things which are problematic, etc. It allows a writer to capture the pace of one's activities, and can be a good beginning for a journal writer who may go back and fill in the story in narrative form regarding all the entries on the list.

*Portraits: This allows the writer to describe a person or any number of persons. The |portrait is never really finished for the qualitative researcher. It evolves and takes on a life of its own throughout the project and the writer may add to and subtract from it as the work takes shape.

*Maps of Consciousness: This technique is borrowed from the arts and it involves actually drawing a map of what one is thinking. She advocates using stick figures, lines or shapeless blobs. It is a way to free up one's thoughts and put them to paper in another format.

*Guided Imagery: This technique is borrowed from the Psychologist who advises that daydreaming images allow for an individual to start writing about any given topic.

*Altered point of view: In this technique, the writer takes a different perspective on any given activity. For the qualitative researcher, for example, one might write about something in an observation or interview, from another person's viewpoint, not the researcher's viewpoint. Many beginning researcher's find it hard to write in the first person, and they talk about their projects in a third person voice. It is a way of looking at something from the outside. For Rainer, looking from the outside, might aid in getting to the inside of a topic.

*Unsent letters: Obviously this is about writing a letter to someone and without any intention of showing it to that person. In a research situation, the researcher may write to one of the participants in the study for example.

*Dialogues: This is the technique Progoff suggests and many writers use this effectively.

The dialogues come from Gestalt therapies and of course Jungian therapy. In Rainier's text (pp.104-111), she offers examples of dialogues with the self, the body and works. These examples are fine models for anyone attempting a dialogue. She highlights a Progoff idea, "dialogues with the body", which suggest conversations with the body as a whole. Here is a portion of that example:

ME: Well body, how do you feel?

BODY:Weak, shaky, a bit hurt. I feel open and vulnerable. I can't trust my environment yet.

ME: But you'll mend?

BODY:Yes, I'll mend. I don't know how soon...

ME: Maybe when you are feeling better, it won't sound so awful

BODY:Maybe..I'm strong, and I can take it..

Obviously, something likes this helps the journal writer, relate to the body's messages. In this particular case, the writer was a person who felt disengaged from her body. I recall how many of my students who keep a journal in class resonate with this dialogue technique. As qualitative researchers, this technique, writing in dialogue format, often helps to sharpen writing skills.

LATER ON SUNDAY

I am trying to think about the best way to summarize all the ideas of this paper so far. The reader who is a qualitative researcher, may be interested in an example from a researcher who kept a journal to reflect on her research practice while she was studying an athletic department:

> ...while I was in the office, staff members came in and were talking about ...the a drawing the staff had the previous day. It was a lottery for a trip to a post season tournament. One of the winners came in and talked about this. I was able to hear his perspective. The

> most interesting thing to me was that I saw this as a ritual in the department...yet, in our interview, this was never mentioned..even though I asked the question to uncover this. This teaches me the limitations of a structured interview format, when trying to uncover a construct like organizational culture. If questions about the symbols of culture can cause respondents to frame their answers in terms of what they think the interviewer wants to know, how much more would this be true, when trying to uncover the basic values of the culture (under study).
>
> R.E. 3-96

This entry offers an example of a person trying to come to terms with a technique in the study and its value, as well as the role of the researcher as it changes and evolves throughout the study. Here is an example of a different sort, from a participant in a study and her thoughts on her classroom.

> I looked over my journal from this year and I see a pattern in it. All my complaints and big headaches seem to come from situations where I have no power. Usually, no --make that, ALL the critical incidents I describe in my journal are about the principal, the state regulations, the characters who have some power. But then I see I am playing their game too-I am avoiding confrontations, I am running away from

> letting myself take control and be Empowered. I have been a wimp. And somehow, I have to deal with my principal. I usually go around him altogether. I also feel like I may need to find a better place to work at this my beloved music.
>
> K.L.L. 5-96

The example goes on at length with this soul searching and although at this point, it is not resolved, the writer certainly is thinking through major issues about teaching and learning, her own position at the school, and this later led to her connecting this to the study at large.

I keep going back to showing examples and so I must include an interactive example. I began interviewing teachers who were thinking of leaving teaching four years ago and have kept contact with a number of the participants in the study. Since I have relocated to Florida, we have been using email in our journal writing. This excerpt may be illustrative of how we write back and forth.

> Natasha: I just looked over the interview transcript you sent and I wanted to add emphasis to one of the comments I made about feeling useless and chewed up when ever I entered the classroom. I think I outgrew teaching... Dont get me wrong...I love the kids I teach, I feel like they are my kids...but I felt I was getting invisible.
>
> Me: Yes, I found that theme later in the second interview we did...anyway, can you help me

> out here and clarify what you mean by
> 'Outgrowing" teaching in your case/
> Also, I am really interested in your
> idea about feeling invisible....

There are many of these email type conversations and I will of course use them as part of the data set to triangulate types of data collected.

ANOTHER MONDAY

As I try to conclude this piece on journal writing, the major ideas I want to punctuate have to do with journal writing, as a technique used in the Arts and Humanities, resonating with the qualitative researcher. Writing down what we think and feel helps in the journey to improve our research practice, for example. Some of the personal examples used in the body of this text, may serve to illustrate the individual writer's thinking processes and the willingness to analyze, rethink, and go deeper into a critical stance about one's life and work. Progoff calls this the scope of personal renewal. Others call it reflection. Still others see journal writing, myself included, as a tangible way to evaluate our experience, improve and clarify one's thinking, and finally become a better writer and scholar if you will. In my own experience of journal writing, and as I see what my students write, I find that we are writing to chronicle our research practice as educators. We are talking about examining our own thoughts, beliefs, and behaviors. Many will say that that helps only the writer. Still, if that were the only outcome of writing a journal, I would say that in itself may help to insure the continuing self reflection each of us claims as a first step to modeling this for our students. Journal writing is a powerful research technique for the researcher and the

participants in a given study. The definition of the role of the researcher and participants in a study are clarified through the reflection and the writing process involved in journal writing. Since the researcher is the research instrument, keeping a journal is a check and balance in the entire course of a qualitative research project. Likewise, keeping a journal over the course of the research project, is a way to practice, Interdisciplinary triangulation. Since journal writing is part of the history of the Arts and Humanities, and part of various psychological studies, educational researchers benefit from this type of triangulation. I often use the metaphor of journal writing as sculpting. Ages ago when I took a sculpting class working with clay, one of the techniques sculptors use is whittling away at portions of this part of the piece or that part and every day as you sculpt, the piece takes a new form. In a very like manner, the journal writer is also doing this. The written text of the journal evolves, is re-shaped, and for the purposes of the researcher, becomes a way to clarify, reinterpret, and define much of our work.

> Oh yes, I've enjoyed reading the past years diary,
> and shall keep it up. I'm amused to find how its
> grown a person, with almost a face of its own.
>
> Virginia Woolf
>
> December 28, 1919.

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